

Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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A Prayer by Dr. Joseph Parker—The Incoming Year

Almighty God, we would begin the year in thy strength, and in all the hope of thine infinite grace. Not one day would we live without thee, every morning would we be found at thy gates, and every eventide with a new song upon our lips. This is our purpose, how much greater is thine intent concerning us. Thou hast given us this lifting up of heart: we speak not in view of our inspiration, our tongue utters what thou hast already told the heart to say. Let thine Amen be greater than our prayer, yea let thine answer overflow the letter of our petition as the waters overflow the channels of the sea. From this day forth may we all be thine, may no man call himself his own, may the cross be the object of our love, and the kingdom of Christ the supreme hope of our life. Forgetting the things that are behind, may we press towards the things that are before—better things, higher and altogether greater; by a mighty and daily constraint of the heart may we be drawn onward to the things which are full of God and therefore full of heaven.

We give thee unanimous and unfeigned thanks for all the mercies of the year to which we have said farewell. Within that year we have wedded the bride, and rocked the cradle, and dug the grave; we have heard the birds sing and seen the flowers die, and now it is gone away with the story of our temptation and our sin, our many prayers and our feeble efforts. The Lord help us that in the year that is now coming to be nobler in every purpose, more steadfast in every grace: may we be marked in our whole life by a broader and stronger charity, and by a consistency which no wind of temptation can shake. Where there is particular fear, may there be particular help, and if any one is desiring this night to offer special prayer for special mercies in circumstances critical, full of danger and distress, the Lord hear us on the behalf of such, and send gracious answers of light and hope to suffering children of men.

The Lord hear us in all our prayers, and cause us to love his altar with a higher affection. The Lord save us from all delusion, all vain notions, all unworthy purposes, and fill us with a consuming desire to himself and his truth more profoundly. If any man have a quarrel against any, let the quarrel cease just now. If any man have an uncharitable thought about his fellow man, let the heart be cleansed of that evil thought just now. If any have consciously done wrong to any fellow creature, work in him an immediate desire to apologize and repair and repent both towards man and towards God. Wherein our purposes are right, strengthen them every one: wherein our counsel is founded in vanity and marked by feebleness, the Lord turn it upside down and visit us with the darkness of confusion.

The Lord pity us, the Lord forgive us. Our prayer is not for our own utterance, nor is it offered in our own name. We pray in the name of the Priest, the Intercessor, the One Mediator between God and man. Remembering his cross, his precious blood, his infinite sacrifice, we commit our prayer to his priesthood and we know the answer will be great and sure. Amen.